

Water for Elephants

by Sara Gruen

Pre-Reading Vocabulary Practice

Optional Post-Reading Quiz Included

Contents & Printing Notes

Unlike our most popular resources, this one's auto-selected.
Review before use, or edit the DOCX via "View / Print / Edit Web
Quiz" on the Resources menu.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

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OPTIONAL POST-READING QUIZ

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Pages are ordered for double-sided printing.

About the Pre-Reading Activity

Open-dictionary; ungraded or completion grade. Students preview 20 words from the upcoming reading, each in a sentence that supports understanding. They choose the best meaning from 3 choices.

About the Optional Post-Reading Quiz

Use after reading, or skip. The same words appear in excerpts from the text.

Practice words: alternative, belligerent, congregate, conspicuous, delirium, disdain, evaluate, gesticulate, imply, indignant, languid, menagerie, perimeter, pique (2), providence, recede, scrutiny, tentative, waver



More Vocabulary Printables

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ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary Preview

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#	KEY
1	C
2	A
3	A
4	A
5	C
6	A
7	A
8	A
9	A
10	A
11	B
12	A
13	C
14	B
15	A
16	B
17	C
18	C
19	A
20	C

Vocabulary Preview

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Read each prompt. Then choose the best meaning for the bold word.

1. Can anyone think of a better **alternative**?
 - A. job
 - B. reason
 - C. possibility
2. She likes to make people lose their cool by starting **belligerent** political arguments.
 - A. hostile or combative
 - B. clever or intelligent
 - C. ridiculous or absurd
3. People **congregated** outside of City Hall to protest.
 - A. came together
 - B. sat down
 - C. shouted
4. She is the most **conspicuous** person on the President's cabinet, often appearing on television.
 - A. easy to notice
 - B. hard to trust
 - C. quick to argue
5. She spun in circles, **delirious** with joy.
 - A. in a state of dizziness or extreme fatigue
 - B. creating a state of embarrassment for those around her
 - C. in a state of having been taken over by excitement or emotion
6. She has nothing but **disdain** for the notion that common people can regulate their own lives better than she can.
 - A. lack of respect
 - B. humility
 - C. intense anger
7. I'm **evaluating** job options.
 - A. considering
 - B. creating
 - C. avoiding
8. I couldn't hear what they were saying or see their faces, but by their **gesticulations**, I'm sure they were angry at each other.
 - A. gestures
 - B. facial expressions
 - C. tones of voice
9. She **implied** that she would vote with us.
 - A. hinted
 - B. insisted
 - C. denied
10. She was **indignant**, but she agreed to be searched when they accused her of shoplifting.
 - A. annoyed at something unjust
 - B. surprised at the unexpected
 - C. defensive about being suspected
11. She greeted us with a **languid** wave of the hand.
 - A. quick and sharp
 - B. slow and relaxed
 - C. stiff and formal

12. The eccentric millionaire kept a sprawling **menagerie** at his country estate.
- A. collection of animals
 - B. row of empty cages
 - C. patch of garden plants
13. Build a fence along the **perimeter** of the yard.
- A. dangerous part
 - B. longest edge
 - C. outer edges
14. The documentary **piqued** her interest in environmental activism.
- A. squelched
 - B. excited
 - C. made more reasonable
15. In a **pique**, I foolishly resigned.
- A. feeling of resentment
 - B. misunderstanding
 - C. thoughtless manner
16. By some stroke of **providence**, the rain stopped just as the wedding began.
- A. careful human planning
 - B. fortunate divine timing
 - C. stubborn bad luck
17. The pain is beginning to **recede**.
- A. get worse
 - B. return again
 - C. diminish (decrease)
18. The new policy faced **scrutiny** from independent reviewers.
- A. strong support
 - B. quick approval
 - C. careful examination
19. She took a **tentative** step to see if her injured ankle would support her weight.
- A. careful
 - B. brave
 - C. confident
20. We will never **waver** in our commitment to provide the best education possible.
- A. speak forcefully
 - B. grow rapidly
 - C. be unsteady

Vocabulary in Context

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____ Score _____ / 20

Read each prompt. Then choose the best meaning for the bold word.

- 1 *There was an ungodly collision of brass, reed, and percussion—trombones and piccolos skidded into cacophony, a tuba farted, and the hollow clang of a cymbal **wavered** out of the big top, over our heads and into oblivion.*
 - A. concentrated, look at, or paid attention to
 - B. made appropriate in size, amount, or degree
 - C. was unsure or weak; or moved back and forth
- 2 *Catherine sees me looking and slides one knee over the other, smoothing her skirt with **languorous** fingers.*
 - A. lacking a reason for doing something
 - B. slow, relaxed, or with little energy
 - C. inconspicuousness or trustworthiness
- 3 *Her mouth is open, her chin **receding** as though she were snoring.*
 - A. opposing (struggling against each other)
 - B. examining in detail to better understand
 - C. moving away or diminishing (become less)
- 4 *They **swerve** and cross the length of the field, tour its **perimeter**, and then swing back around.*
 - A. a fat compound
 - B. a hoofed mamma
 - C. the outer edge
- 5 *The crowd is denser, their interest **piqued**.*
 - A. marked important text
 - B. aroused
 - C. recognized difference
- 6 *The next one—another roustabout—also leaves in a fit of **pique**.*
 - A. feelings of resentment or indignation
 - B. spend time with; or someone with whom a person spends a lot of time
 - C. an overwhelming amount; or to overwhelm -- especially said of water
- 7 *Their parents **congregate** beneath, holding the hands of younger siblings and pointing to various marvels appearing in front of them.*
 - A. come together as a group
 - B. include consideration of
 - C. struggle or disagreement
- 8 *It's just dawned on me that the floors of their dens are **conspicuously** clean.*
 - A. easily noticed -- typically attracting attention such as by being large, flashy, or unusual
 - B. in a manner that explains or demonstrates an understanding of something in a particular way
 - C. of mental activity of which one is not aware, but which can influence feelings and behavior
- 9 *Her expression of bored **disdain** drops immediately.*
 - A. lack of respect -- suggesting distaste and an undeserved sense of superiority
 - B. differ; or change
 - C. influence opinion
- 10 *"He's ten years younger than me," I say, straightening up **indignantly**.*
 - A. with anger or annoyance at something unjust or wrong
 - B. with surprise as something unexpected
 - C. with acceptance of something undesired as unavoidable
- 11 *Day after day he marches into town, negotiating by telegram, and by the following Friday the son has agreed to meet us in **Providence** and take custody of the old man.*
 - A. a particular way of seeing or thinking about things
 - B. resulting from God's intervention or plan; or lucky
 - C. collection of star systems held together by gravity

- 12 Uncle Al is **delirious**, standing in the center of the hippodrome track with his arms and face raised, basking in the coins that rain down on him.
- A. relating separately to the people or things just mentioned
 - B. in a manner of accepting something as true (without proof)
 - C. extremely happy and excited
- 13 It's not like we had a lot of **alternatives**.
- A. psychiatrists
 - B. fat compounds
 - C. other possibilities
- 14 "I'm not **implying** anything," the clerk says.
- A. suggesting (saying indirectly)
 - B. going back to a previous state
 - C. acting in an official capacity
- 15 I lean over and **evaluate** Rosie's toenails, running my hands along the underside of her foot.
- A. to think carefully and make a judgment about
 - B. say something or make a sound with the voice
 - C. move out of an interacting position; or stop
- 16 Then she leans in and kisses me, a gentle kiss, **tentative** but lingering.
- A. done in a careful way indicating a lack of confidence
 - B. not demonstrating
 - C. able to challenge
- 17 He **scrutinizes** me for what feels like a very long time.
- A. hires, reserves, books, or occupies
 - B. estimates (almost, but not exactly)
 - C. looks at or examines very carefully
- 18 The crowd mills around the **menagerie**, viewing the animals on their way to the big top.
- A. a collection of wild animals in captivity; or their enclosure
 - B. someone who emphasizes a person's capacity for self-realization through reason rather than through religion and the supernatural
 - C. an inhabitant of Assyria -- an ancient kingdom centered in northern Mesopotamia which is in present-day Iraq; or their language
- 19 Her expression is unmistakably **belligerent**.
- A. hostile (showing the attitude of one eager to fight)
 - B. related to intelligence -- such as requiring, appealing to, or possessing intelligence
 - C. (adjective) designed to stop something OR (noun) something that stops something else
- 20 She **gesticulates** wildly, arms flailing.
- A. makes gestures (hand or body movements)
 - B. releases from slavery or servitude; or (metaphorically) from social restraints
 - C. becomes less intense, less severe, or less active -- perhaps goes away entirely

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary in Context

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#	KEY	WORD	NOTE
1	C	waver	High-utility academic word; used 4 times in this book.
2	B	languid	Used 3 times in this book.
3	C	recede	Used 5 times in this book.
4	C	perimeter	Used 8 times in this book.
5	B	perique (as in: perique your interest)	2 meanings in this book.
6	A	perique (as in: in a perique about it)	2 meanings in this book.
7	A	congregate	Used 2 times in this book.
8	A	conspicuous	High-utility academic word; used 5 times in this book.
9	A	disdain	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this book.
10	A	indignant	High-utility academic word; used 5 times in this book.
11	B	providence (as in: divine providence)	Used 6 times in this book.
12	C	delirium (as in: delirious with joy)	Used 2 times in this book.
13	C	alternative (as in: an alternative plan)	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this book.
14	A	imply	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this book.
15	A	evaluate	High-utility academic word; used 2 times in this book.
16	A	tentative (as in: said it tentatively)	High-utility academic word; used 8 times in this book.
17	C	scrutiny	High-utility academic word; used 3 times in this book.
18	A	menagerie	Used 85 times in this book.
19	A	belligerent	Used 2 times in this book.
20	A	gesticulate	Used 3 times in this book.